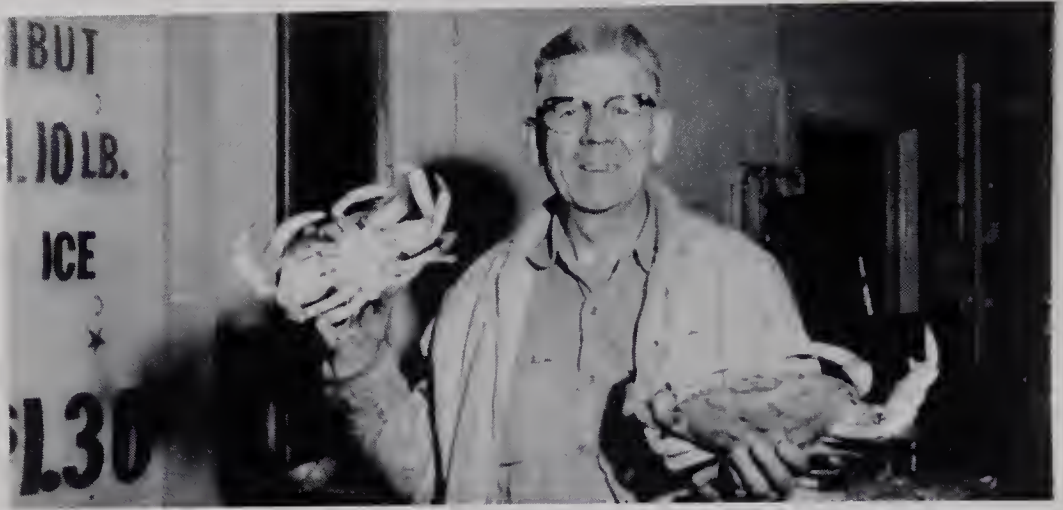


CLATSOP COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY QUARTERLY

CUMTUX



Vol. 13, No. 4 – Fall, 1993



Courtesy of Beverly Furnish

Clarence Sigurdson, President of the Bell Buoy Crab Company, at work at the store in Seaside. This business, which he owned and operated along with his younger brothers, Henry and Oswald and their families, has been a popular stop for tourists and residents for many decades.

Clarence Sigurdson: Raised By The Sea

One of the best story-tellers in the area is Clarence Sigurdson whose 1973 book, *Raised By The Sea*, contains some hilarious stories about growing up in Warrenton. The author is now celebrating his ninety-second birthday, having been born on September 14, 1901, the ninth child of ten boys and two girls born to Asvaldur and Anna Sigurdson, immigrants from Iceland. He currently resides in Seaside. With his permission, we borrowed some stories from this book. See page 21. *Raised By The Sea* is not on sale at present, but can be checked out at local libraries.



Dodging fire from B.B. guns, deliberating over a shot in a game of marbles, skinny-dipping in a swimming hole, bruising shins and breaking bones: these are some of the memories of growing up in Fernhill, Hammond and Warrenton that are shared with the reader in this issue of *Cumtux*. The focus is on life in small communities in Clatsop County. The next issue will continue this theme with articles on the Nehalem Valley planned to coincide with an exhibit on that area at the Heritage Center in January, 1994.



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HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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CUMTUX

CLATSOP COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
QUARTERLY Vol. 13, No. 4 -Fall, 1993

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COVER:

*Members of the 1936 graduating class from Fernhill School
celebrating on the beach at Seaside. Courtesy of Belva Johnson Olson*

Astorian Printing Co.

CUMTUX: Chinook jargon:

"To know . . . acknowledge . . . to inform."



Photo at left shows the original Point Adams Coast Guard Station in Hammond built in 1888 and torn down in 1940. The new station, seen in the top and bottom photos, was built in 1939 and still stands.



My Impression of Hammond during the Depression Years

by Charles Norman Moore

The following article is from a speech given on November 5, 1992, at a luncheon of the Clatsop County Historical Society. Sections have been added, and some parts have been deleted as more research has been done. It is the desire of the writer that this story will be as accurate as possible. One has to remember that to recall events which happened over sixty years ago is difficult. If any gross errors have been made, please be aware of the fact that they weren't purposely made. It is hoped that others will come forward with stories about their town or community.

My folks, Charles and Eathel Abbey Moore, my sister, Jennesse, and I moved to Hammond from Warrenton in the fall of 1925. We had moved to Warrenton the summer of 1922 in time to become a little acquainted with downtown Astoria before the disastrous fire on the morning of December 8, 1922. Even as a child, I was greatly impressed by the enormity of the damage caused by the conflagration.

New Astoria

Originally, the little town of Hammond was called New Astoria. It was part of the B.C. Kindred donation



Hammond's waterfront, looking to the west. The houses with trees in the background are located on the "Flats." This water area is all filled in at present. Hammond's marina is in the area to the right of the picture today.

land claim. In the year of 1899, most of the claim was platted into the town of New Astoria, which included Flavel. The platting was done by Charles Ford, John Smith, and Marshall Kinney, the latter being a cannery owner in Astoria. In a vote in 1918 by the citizens of Warrenton, Flavel became a part of that town. At a special election in the town of New Astoria, August 28, 1915 and amended at the general election on January 15, 1916, the town was named Hammond. This name honored A.B. Hammond, who built the first railroad from Goble to Hammond. Mr. Hammond owned a sawmill in Astoria which burned in 1922, and was never rebuilt.

The Flats

My folks rented a house in the area of Hammond called the Flats by local residents. Our nearest neighbors were Donald and Mabel Reisdorf, and their children, Lois, Betty, Dorothy June, and Douglas, who came along a little later. They lived directly across the street from us. The Aldermans, who lived nearby, had several boys, Loyal, youngest of the boys, still lives south of Miles Crossing. Addie and Ruth

Matteson moved into the house just west of us. Their family included several boys: Donald, Danny, Duane, Willard, Glen, and a girl, Shirley. The Matteson boys were my playmates, and the Reisdorf girls were my sister's.

There were fewer houses on the Flats in the 1920's, so there was plenty of space for youngsters to play their games. One has to remember that there was no television, or even radio to keep young people inside, so they and the adults spent more time out of doors. Today's life-style is so much different that even adults, who have reached the "senior citizen age," haven't much recollection of how it was in the "good old days." It is sad that most people today don't have the same values of that era.

Hammond, at one time, had the unique distinction of being the only town in the state of Oregon adjacent to a fort, as Stevens was the only fort in the state. We might add that in 1949, quite a chunk of Fort Stevens was deeded to the town of Hammond. In the Summer of 1992, as most of you know, Hammond became a part of Warrenton. There was some opposition to this move by some of the old timers of Hammond.

As far as they are concerned, there will always be a Hammond.

In 1926, Zack Tetlow, grandfather of Roger Tetlow, died. My folks borrowed money from my maternal grandfather, Orville Abbey, in Iowa. They used the money to purchase the house in which Mr. Tetlow had lived from his estate. This house was the original schoolhouse in Hammond, built in 1893 or just one hundred years ago. My grandfather built a stairway upstairs so that area could be utilized. My dad



1926 photograph of our home. The original Hammond schoolhouse was built in 1893. The house to the right was vacant so my dad bought it for the lumber and the garden space after it was torn down.

later had dormers added which changed the appearance of the house somewhat. Also he used lumber, obtained from buying and tearing down the house next door, to finish the upstairs. This is where my sister's and my room was located. My grandfather, who came to live with us, worked as the fort carpenter at Fort Stevens in 1926 and 1927. It might be of interest to some that in 1933, or sixty years ago, my sister, Jenness, and I planted poplar trees in our yard, some of which are still standing. The old house is still used as a residence, but seems to be in an attitude of repair or dis-repair.

An interesting side note might be interjected here concerning the old house next to us. After the inhabitants

Hammond Grade School

My sister and I attended the Hammond Grade School which was located on 8th Avenue. This building was erected in 1901 by Charles Ford, one of the three men who platted the original town of New Astoria. Marshall Kinney, another of the founding fathers of New Astoria, donated the property for the building and playgrounds. The two second-story rooms weren't used as classrooms. Basketball baskets were put in each end of one of them so the boys could practice. The upper story has been removed, and an addition has been made to the lower section. This structure is now a private residence. Rusk Nedry was principal and teacher of the upper four grades. Mr. Nedry

spent most of his time at his desk calling each class up to the front for recitation by ringing a bell. Several times a day, in the cold weather, Mr. Nedry stoked the large round heating stove, and put chunks of wood in it. This was the source of heat for the room, and not having a thermostat, the heat was hard to control. Helen Glanz, whose father was one of the town's leading citizens, taught the first four grades. We marched into the school room each morning to a patriotic march, usually

one by John Philip Sousa. I'm sure this was common practice by most schools at that time. A pupil with the best deportment was chosen to ring the school bell and to raise and lower the flag. I felt this a great honor to perform each of these duties from time to time. During recess, noontime, and before school, students played a variety of games. Some of them were "Run Sheep Run" or "Blackman." Swinging on the Giant Stride was a real thrill, as one



Hammond Grade School was erected in 1901 by Charles Ford. This building, with the upper story removed, is a private residence.

vacated it, Dad bought it, as was noted previously. The price was about \$230. The Pickerrines, as we called them, were Finnish. The family included the father and mother, two sons, Pete and Jack, and a daughter, Selma. The father, a man in his sixties, and I, around eleven or twelve, had a running battle over logs used for firewood from the river beach. This is where I learned my first Finnish, mostly swear words, I'm afraid.



Bob Gray's old store, which was moved south a block, faced south instead of west. Tiki Charters is located here now. The latter had been a store run by Don and Louise Shaw. John and Jenness Cathers are standing by fence.

literally took one's life in one's hands, to be whirled around by some of the older boys. The swings were a milder form of recreation as was the teeter-totter, except when some of the older children became involved. Standing to "pump up" in the swings, or bouncing the younger ones on the teeter-totter was forbidden. There was very little supervision, however, and only an injury slowed these practices down.

Baseball was played with a large hard ball, but most of the boys didn't have mitts because they couldn't afford them. Some of us preferred the milder game of marbles. We weren't allowed to play "keeps," and, believe it or not, we didn't. I still have some of my marbles, including my favorite shooter, an "aggie." When it was storming too hard to play outside, the boys played soccer in the basement. The older and larger boys seemed to enjoy kicking the shins of the younger ones. Since I

was usually smaller, my shins were black and blue most of the time.

The townspeople

There were many important personages in town. Among them was our storekeeper, Bob Gray. He owned and operated a grocery store on the southeast corner of what is now 5th Avenue and Iredale Street. (There weren't any street signs in those days.)



Hammond's waterfront in the 1930s. Mrs. E.M. Lalley's store is in the center of the picture. Pilings to the left hold the walkway which led to a net rack out in the Columbia.

This is where we bought most of our groceries, except once in a while when we drove over to Astoria. Here we bought some special items at Piggly Wiggly or Fred Meyers. Some of our food came from that which was canned from our garden.

Later, the store was purchased and run by Fred Parsons, who in time, moved the contents of the building down across Pacific Avenue. The store was then located next to Harvey Mowicks, where the Surf Charters is now. Mr. Mowick, the town barber, had a barber shop right next to his house. Fred and Leone Parsons, with their two sons, Fred Jr. and Edward, moved into a house west of ours. This residence had been occupied by Billy and Winnie Ballhorn, and their two children, Harry and Dorothy. Mr. Ballhorn was a butcher.

Besides groceries and various other items, the store was also the gas station. Gas was pumped by hand into a bowl type contraption with numbers indicating gallons on the clear glass bowl and therefore wasn't very accurate. The gas was then released through a hose and nozzle, and ran into the vehicle's tank by gravity. Fred Parsons, by this time, had become the postmaster, so was very important in our lives. In time, the post office was moved into another building across the street, and Fred's brother-in-law was the postmaster. Items bought at Parson's store were put on a slip and paid up at the end of the month. When the bill was paid up, one was rewarded with a candy bar or two. This was always a treat for my sister and me because we usually would get the candy. Candy bars were only a nickel, but money was pretty hard to come by.

Another interesting person was Mrs. E.M. Lalley, the first postmistress of Flavel, which she became in 1895. She had a store and apartment building north and across 5th Avenue from Bob Gray's store. She had come to

Hammond or New Astoria from Iowa, arriving on May 24, 1894. The post office was located in her store. We were still getting our mail there in 1925. Directly in front of the store, on the west side, was a walkway going out into the Columbia River. It led to a large planked dock area, which contained racks for the gillnetters on which to dry their nets, or work on them. Not many fishermen used this rack though, as most of the fishermen came from Warrenton, Astoria, or ports in Washington.

Willis Mudd, an uncle of the late Jerry Gohl, had a grocery store which stood where the Philadelphia Church is now located. The family had living quarters above the store. The Philadelphia Church also takes in the area where the Herman Johnsons lived. They had apple trees which were very tempting to young people coming home from school, as youngsters are always hungry. Instead of picking up the apples from the ground, we usually took them from the trees. I'm sure this made Mr. Johnson very unhappy.

Evening entertainment

Another establishment considered important by some, and its proprietor, was Johnny Eckman's saloon and poolhall. It was located in the vicinity where the Hammond Post Office and Rosalie's store now stand. At times, some of the frequenters of the saloon would have difficulty maintaining their equilibrium after over-imbibing. They usually tried to find their way home with a buddy who had as much difficulty keeping his feet as the other. More than once several of them were trying to hold up the posts of the porch of Bob Gray's store. I was happy that my dad didn't spend any time here. He was greatly influenced by my mother who hated any form of alcoholic beverage. She was a teetotaler all her life.

The old Hammond Dance Hall

usually had a dance on Saturday night, and featured both old-time and modern music. If I remember rightly, the music was provided by the George Cobban Dance Orchestra. The hall was also used for social events. Our town team played their basketball games there as did our grade school team. Many of those who came on Saturday night to dance, had already been to the Jockey Club on Thursday night. There they had danced to the lively tunes of Buzz Beemer and his orchestra. Coleman's Cove, a restaurant and lounge, is located where the Hammond Dance Hall was. The place where the Jockey Club stood now holds a private residence. No violence was ever encountered at either place, as people went there to have a good time.

The estuary

From our area, one could see the old Desdemona Sands lighthouse. Its light, at night, and foghorn warned pilots to steer their ships clear or run aground on the Sands. The old lighthouse has long since been removed, and now other navigational devices serve the same purpose, and are less expensive to maintain. Looking out on the wide expanse of the estuary of the Columbia, at night, one could view the awe-inspiring sight of the lights of hundreds of gillnet boats. Present, too, of course, was the incessant roar of the boat engines, as fishermen pulled in their nets containing Chinooks weighing up to seventy pounds. The old-timers would say, "Those were the days." Seeing that "sea of lights" and hearing those engines is an experience our children and grandchildren will never have, nor will we ever again.

Hammond's churches

The old Methodist Church was located not two hundred feet northeast of our house. Here is where youngsters and a few oldsters went to Sunday School. As I remember, no church

services were held here in my time, except for a group of people from Warrenton. It is my understanding that those meeting together in the 1930s were the founders of the present-day Philadelphia Church. The old Methodist Church has been gone for years.

The Catholics of the area maintained a little church building located a couple of hundred yards west of the Methodist Church. A newer church is located between what was Mrs. Lalley's store and the Coast Guard Station and farther out toward the river. Actually where it now is, the Columbia was several feet deep at high tide.



The old Catholic Church was located on what is now 5th Avenue in Hammond. The church was later torn down.

Benson log rafts

I remember the enormous Benson cigar log rafts which used eighty tons of chains to hold them together. They were called cigar rafts because of their shape. A picture of one of the rafts can be seen on the inside of the back cover of the Spring 1990 *Cumtux*. These rafts were pushed and pulled down the channel by large stern-wheelers. They stopped out about Sand Island where large ocean-going tugs took them in tow and towed them to sawmills down the coast. It should be noted here that the only way logs went to any other country in those days was as finished lumber or Jap

squares. Mills were very busy with plenty of work.

Point Adams Packing Company, founded by Lawrence Rogers and Edward Beard, was going strong at this time, with plenty of salmon to can. The story about the founding of this company can be found in the Summer 1987 issue of *Cumtux*. This story was written by Charles Rogers and Nancy Bates, son and daughter of Lawrence Rogers. Most of the women in the area, who wanted or needed work, and also many men, had jobs there during the fishing season. Some had steady employment there. Some young people worked summers. I worked there the summer I was sixteen.

The Coast Guard

Now would be the time to inject the story of a very important institution in Hammond, the United States Coast Guard. It was vital to the life of Hammond as so many of the male inhabitants were members of this service organization. Not only did they perform their duties of water rescues of many kinds, but they also provided services within the community. Since they and their families were living here, the children went to the local grade school. They also rented or owned their homes, paying taxes, and traded at the stores. Another important fact is that single, eligible young men, in several cases, took some of the local young ladies as their brides. Among them were the following: Walter Enke who married Bernice Simons, Don Shaw married Louise Storm, Arley Jensen married Roberta Storm, Bill Wiley and Harriette (McDermott) Sheler were united in marriage, John Cathers and my sister, Jenness, were married in the garden of our home, on September 3, 1938. This was our folks' twenty-fourth wedding anniversary. John was later in charge of the Coast Guard station in Hammond for several years. A number

of the Coast Guard and their wives were friends or good acquaintances of the folks, and I remember them well. Some of them were: Captain Oscar Wicklund and his wife, B.C. and Ellen Anderson, Captain and Mrs. Holst, Mr. and Mrs. Charley Hunt, Jim and Mardel Lindquist, Jim and Clarabel Conley, Dick and Dolly Van Hine, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Woodsworth, and others.

It should be noted here that the father of Clara (Callie) Munson was responsible for starting the Coast Guard in this area. According to my mother, Eathel Abbey Moore, who did research on it and wrote the Callie Munson story in her column, "Singing Sands of Clatsop," the Coast Guard was established on the Columbia in 1875. A story about Callie Munson appears in the Spring 1993 issue of *Cumtux*, and was written by Mary L. Mason.

We should mention the Coast Guard tower in Fort Stevens which was located just south of Battery Mishler. From there a man on watch would look for distress signals anywhere within his field of vision. If he observed any, he would alert personnel at the station in Hammond and a lifeboat could be sent to the scene of the problem. Another tower was erected later nearer the mouth of the river, by the "C" parking lot. This tower was eliminated several years ago. Advance communications and aircraft have made the use of towers obsolete.

Fort Stevens

Hammond had wooden sidewalks all over town and the streets were graveled, except for Pacific Avenue which was and is now the main street. The young people of the area could not skate on the board sidewalks; they used the concrete sidewalks and roads in Fort Stevens instead. Many of the facilities of the fort were used by young and old alike during the Depression years. Since most of the year there was only a cadre



The Fort Stevens Hospital was demolished years ago.

of maintenance personnel present, and there wasn't any war going on, restrictions for entry into the area were few. During the summer the National Guard came to train on the big guns of Battery Russell, Battery Clark and others. The rest of the year, just the regulars were left. The fort hospital was used from time to time, and although there were no doctors or nurses present, a corpsman was able to care for minor cases. The major or more severe ones had to be taken to Astoria. It was handy for me at least twice: when boiling tar was poured on my hand and when I fell from my bicycle and split my scalp open. Probably the most important building in the fort for the people of Hammond and vicinity was the theater. Many of the area's inhabitants were there for every change of movies, which took place at least three times a week. One couldn't kick on the admission price of ten cents. During the days of the "silents," we were thrilled by the escapades of Hoot Gibson, Ken Maynard, Richard Dix, Tom Mix, Douglas Fairbanks, Charlie Chaplin, Francis X. Bushman, and Harold Lloyd. How many of you remember *The Gold Rush*? To me this was the funniest movie of all times. Most of these men

were my heroes. Of course, there were the ladies of the silent screen: Gloria Swanson, Greta Garbo, Helen Hayes, Mary Pickford and others. I can still hear Dorothy Ballhorn playing a stirring selection on the piano as she did when anything exciting was happening, such as the cavalry coming to save the settlers from a band of Indians.

As the Coast Guardsmen had taken some of the local damsels as their wives, so did a number of the soldiers of Fort Stevens. Among these were: Scotty Cameron who married Charlotte Forney, Gordon Rounde and Margaret Forney, Johnney Carden and Shirley Matteson, Bob Gohl and Geraldine (Jerry) Nelson and Maynard Miller and Vivian Olney. Some of them established their homes, had businesses, or worked here after the war. Many of the former members of the Coast Guard did the same.

River frozen over

At high tide, the Columbia came within a mark of less than a hundred yards from our house. I remember a period of several days in 1928 when the river was frozen in large hummocks. These large piles of ice extended at least a quarter of a mile out from the beach



Looking west toward Ft. Stevens. Winter scene of Hammond's main street in the 1930s.

and were at least eight feet high. It looked like pictures I had seen of the Arctic. The temperature was supposed to have been ten degrees above zero, but the chill factor was probably thirty degrees below. (We didn't know anything about chill factor in those days, but just knew it was bitterly cold.) I'd never been so cold in my life, or have been since. I felt the cold more then than I did fourteen years later in Anchorage, Alaska, where it was 35 to 40 degrees below zero. It was said that the Columbia, during this time, was frozen so thick, between Rainier and Longview, that people could walk across the river between these two towns. Someone reported that a team of horses was driven across the river at this time.

During the 1920s, there were several winters when the snow was up to three feet deep on the level, and deeper than that in drifts. The strong east wind blasted Point Adams and drifted the snow.

I'm sure others in the county were having their problems too. Unfortunately, we were so busy trying to cope with our own problems that we didn't have time to think of anyone else. We had to thaw frozen pipes, keep three stoves full of wood, and keep enough

good dry wood under cover to stoke these fires. Our large, uninsulated house required plenty of heat, as did most of the houses of that day. The snow usually wouldn't last long enough as far as the youngsters were concerned, but much too long for the adults.

After about a week of cold and snow, then would come a thawing and freezing period along with a freezing rain which would produce a full scale "silver thaw." Everything was coated with thick layers of ice. The power lines had ice up to three inches in diameter. These and the ice-laden trees would be pulled to the ground by the extreme weight. It was dangerous to be outside, especially when the strong east wind was blowing. It kept people pretty close to home. Ice covered wooden sidewalks which were swept bare of snow. It was almost impossible to walk on them against the wind. For a short time, during some winters, we could skate on the pond just to the west of our house. I remember it was hard to wait until the ice had frozen thick enough to hold us up. No newfangled skates for me, as I used a pair of "Hollanders," made of steel and wood by my grandad and another man back in Iowa. They had to be tied on one's shoes with leather thongs. I still have the skates after all



Our home, the original schoolhouse, with the pond, on which we skated, in the foreground. This pond has been filled and a storage shed stands on the left. Apartments are being constructed on a large section of the filled area.

these years. We didn't have much time to skate as a Chinook wind would blow and thaw the ice, usually in a day or two. The pond area has been filled and a storage shed stands there now. Also part of that area and our garden space has been filled and several apartments are being built here. Such is progress.

The swimming pole

The bigger boys didn't have an "ol' swimmin' hole" so we went to Swash Lake in Fort Stevens. This was declared "off limits" by our parents, but we went anyway, mainly for adventure. Some of the girls went out at times, but never with the boys because we "skinny dipped." There were rumors that the girls did too, but we never did catch them at it. In fact, I never saw a girl in the area. The Columbia was dangerous

for swimming because the beach was covered with broken glass and farther out the current was too strong. I'm not sure why we didn't use Coffinbury Lake. Swash Lake was a real challenge as the cold water from the lagoon swept through a channel twenty or twenty-five feet wide when the tide was flooding.

Hammond and vicinity was a good place in which to grow up in the 1920s and 1930s. I'm thankful to have lived there during that period of my life. As young people, we weren't faced with the temptations of drugs and alcohol, also, A.I.D.S. and the pressures which are present for young people today. ♦

Charles N. Moore also contributed the article "Mom, Eathel Abbey Moore" in the Spring 1993 issue of Cumtux. All photographs in this article are courtesy of the author.



Swash Lake, located in Fort Stevens, was our favorite swimming area.

A Frightful Calamity

by Liisa Penner

A homestead property on Shag Lake (also known as Burke Lake) east of Ridge Road on Clatsop Plains was the scene of a tragedy in June 1879. But, had it not been for what the Astoria newspaper from June 13, 1879 labeled a "Frightful Calamity," we would not have learned about the heroic lives of the couple who once lived here. It happened this way:

About three o'clock on a Saturday afternoon, Robert Abbott was driving his team of horses down the road that we now call Ridge Road, when he came to a tree that had fallen across it. While looking for a way around the fallen tree, he discovered the lifeless bodies of John Burke and his daughter, Emma. Abbott brought the authorities who examined the scene and concluded that the two died as a result of a set of related accidents. John Burke had been chopping down a tree while his daughter, Emma, sat nearby and watched. When the tree fell, it hit a dry stub which landed on Emma. When her father ran to her assistance, he was also struck by a falling limb. Death for both was probably instantaneous.

Two coffins were built and taken to the scene of the accident. On Sunday, the bodies were placed on board the steamer *General Canby* which carried them to Astoria. The funeral service took place at the Catholic Church under the auspices of the Hibernian Society (a benevolent and fraternal society for the Irish), with Rev. Father Orth preaching the funeral sermon. The bodies were then taken by horse and wagon to the top of the hill to the old Pioneer

Cemetery and buried close to 15th Street, between what is now Madison and Niagara, where a headstone, or what is left of one, still marks their graves.

Thomas Dealey, a good friend of the Burkes, asked the Editor of the *Astorian* to print the story of their lives which follows:

In Memoriam

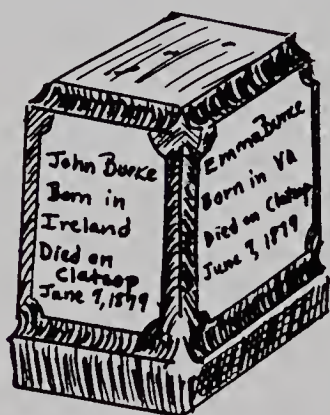
Astoria, June 9, 1879

Editor Astorian:

Will you be kind enough to publish in your valuable journal the following sketch of the late John Burke and his daughter, Emma, and oblige a comrade, who has served with him in the Union army during the war of the rebellion, and participated in forty six engagements with him, from the first Bull Run to the surrender at Appomattox.

John Burke was born in the parish of Cedra, in the county of Tipperary, Ireland, about the year 1829. Landed in the city of New Orleans, Louisiana, in 1850. Enlisted in the United States army in 1861. Was then married, his wife being the widow of an American soldier named Wallace, and was the first American woman to enter the city of Mexico after its surrender during the Mexican war. . . . On the morning of the first of July, 1862, while in sight of Malvern hill, and going in that direction, a shell from a rebel battery burst under the wagon cover, under which herself and the late Emma were seated (Emma being then an infant.) The driver, being wounded slightly and more scared than hurt, fled in horror

from the spot, leaving team, woman and child and was never seen in his company after, but reported at fortress Monroe for medical treatment. Mrs. Burke then took the reins and drove her six mule team into camp under a fire from the rebel batteries of Magredor, and was received with a



Headstone at Hillside Cemetery
at 15th and Niagara Streets in Astoria.

shout of triumph by the front of the grand army of the Potomac.

After the war was over, Mrs. Burke gave up the martial spirit to her redeemer at Harper's Ferry, Virginia, and was buried at that place with military honors. John came to Fort Stevens in 1865, in October of that year, when that place was a wilderness, and toiled with the balance of the veterans of his late campaigns to make it one of the nicest posts on the Pacific slope. Both the late Mr. Burke and the writer served under its present commander, Major Throckmorton, one of the bravest young officers of the late war, and who always had the confidence of the enlisted men, as well as for his kind treatment of them, as for his gallant bravery in action, having his father fighting against him at the first Bull Run, and commanding the dreaded Black Horse Cavalry of Virginia. While Burke was in the army, he homesteaded the place where he met with his sad end, and from the manner in which the people of Clatsop collected to pay their last tribute

of respect to his remains, and that of his daughter, showed that he was as good a citizen as he was brave as a soldier.

Miss Emma Burke was born at Camp Upton, Virginia, three miles south of Alexandria, and though not being able to drudge the enemy, nevertheless, went through the campaign and was several times under fire. In 1865, before starting from the east, she was placed in a convent by her father, and only lately arrived in this state from Washington, to meet also her sad end, and to deliver up her spirit with that of the father, by whom she was dearly loved. I have often nursed her in her infancy, and never thought it would fall to my lot to be chief mourner, to do the last kind act to their mortal remains. May they rest in peace. . . .

Thomas Dealey.

A search for money on the property ensued after it was discovered that \$1800 in bonds had been sewn into the clothing worn by Emma Burke. \$300 in coin was found under a cracker box in the room where she slept, but nothing more of value was reported found.

John Burke was mentioned in other Clatsop County records. He was on the 1864 military list for the county (a listing of those available for military service). According to the homestead records, he had been a member of Fort Stevens Battery "C" 2nd U.S. Artillery from March 6, 1864 to March 6, 1870. On April 6, 1868, he applied for his homestead claim of 115.61 acres on lots 5, 7, 8 and 9 in section 20 in township 8 north, range 10 west, not far from Fort Stevens. He later reported that he had resided on his homestead claim from March 6, 1870, two years after he applied for the claim. He filed his final proof on February 17, 1875, receiving homestead certificate number 542. The 1870 federal census had found him living alone on Clatsop Plains, a 41 year-old farmer who had been born in Ireland. ♦

Small Towns and Train Stops in Clatsop County

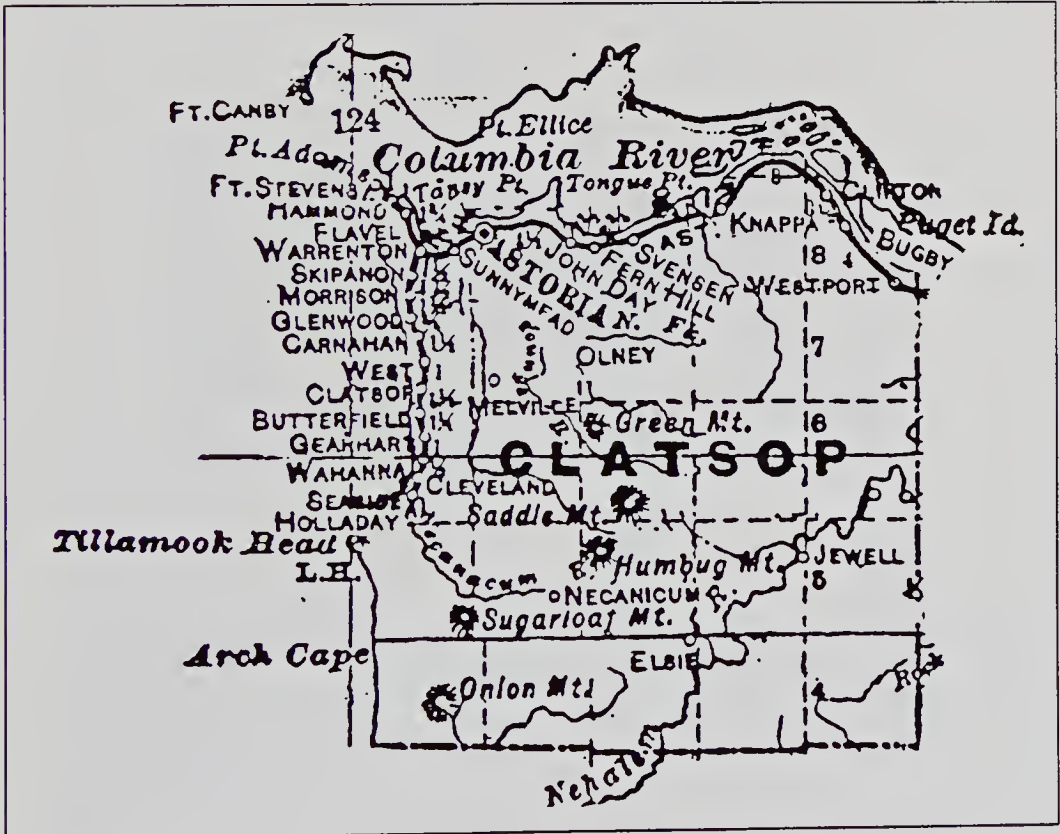
by Liisa Penner

Old maps of the county show names of towns no longer existing as in the (circa 1915) map below. Some places on these maps were little more than post offices operating out of homes to serve large, sparsely-populated areas; these were usually named after the family who distributed the mail. Some places were the dreams of promoters who failed to attract buyers. Some owed their brief existence to the railroad.

TRAIN STOPS

In her book, *Life on Clatsop*, Inez

Stafford Hanson wrote that the railroad had to purchase a right-of-way from every land-owner along the route. The deeds usually stipulated that the railroad line must establish a flag station and must stop once a day if signaled at that station. "In those early days, the train had to stop at practically every farm on Clatsop Plains. At one time there were thirteen flag stops within a distance of about eleven miles. Beginning with Warrenton, they were Skipanon, Columbia Beach, Glenwood, Carnahan, Allendale, West, Clatsop, Butterfield, Gearhart, Wahanna, Surf, Seaside and Holladay." Clarence Sigurdson wrote in his book, *Raised By The Sea*, that "a lot



of these stops were discontinued after those who granted the right of ways died off. . . Once, when Josiah West was still alive, the railroad notified him his stop would be discontinued. He forced them to continue the stop as that was part of the right-of-way agreement he had made with them." The stops

Sigurdson remembers on leaving Astoria, were: the Port Docks (in the later days), Meriwether (across Youngs Bay), Sunnymead, Warrenton, Skipanon, Morrison, Carnahan, West, Clatsop, Del Rey Beach, Gearhart, Wahanna, Surf, Seaside, and Holladay which was last and where the train



DELLMOOR HOUSE AND TRAIN STOP

This house, considerably altered, still stands on Dellmoor Road north of Gearhart and east of Highway 26. It was named for John S. Dellinger, former publisher of the *Daily Morning Astorian*, the *Nehalem Herald* and Warrenton's first newspaper, the *Port Oregon Tribune*. It was located alongside one of the first commercial cranberry bogs in Clatsop County.

turned around. The United States Spruce Division's 1918 photographs of the house at Dellmoor seem to indicate that this was also a train stop.

ORIGIN OF NAMES

Lewis A. McArthur's book, *Oregon Geographic Names*, (on sale at the Clatsop County Historical Society) gives the origin of place names throughout the state. In abstracting the Clatsop County names and summarizing their origin, it was found that about thirty-seven percent of the names of communities and geographical features such as rivers and lakes owed their origin to families that lived in the area at one time, such as: Aldrich (Point), Burnside, Carnahan, Denver, Olney, Medley, Morrison, Svensen and Twilight (Creek). Some communities and features were named after people who never lived here, but had a proprietary interest, such as Astoria for John Jacob Astor, or were held in esteem: Youngs Bay for Sir George Young of the British Royal Navy, Fort Stevens for Isaac Ingalls Stevens, a governor of Washington Territory, Point Adams, after John Adams, early United States president and Hammond for A.B. Hammond, the railroad promoter. One name was an unusual choice: John Day, a member of the Astor-Hunt party who nearly died of exposure and starvation and went insane as a result of this experience. He died in either 1819 or 1820 in Astoria or in the Snake River country, according to different stories. Three communities were named after postmasters: (Herman) Wise and (James W.) Hare, postmasters at Astoria, and (Marshall) Jewell, a postmaster general of the United States.

The surname alone was used in some cases. In others, a word describing the area was added to it, such as Kindred Park and Jeffers Gardens. These names were designed by real estate promoters. Some surnames were modified: Dellmoor was named for the Dellinger family plus moor for the

cranberry bogs; Warrenton was named for the Warren family plus "ton" for town; Westport for the John West family (West Lake was named for a different West family); Brownsmead for W.G. Brown, a Portland engineer, and "mead" for meadow. Bradwood is a contraction of two names, Bradley and Woodward, men who owned the mill there.

At least three Christian or given names of men were used: Albert for Albert Berglund, Melville for Melville Ingalls and Meriwether for Capt. Meriwether Lewis of Lewis and Clark fame. There were only three names of women used for place names in Clatsop County; all three were given names, Barbra (an apparent misspelling for a community or post office once located near the southern county line); Mary's Creek for Mary Burnside; and Elsie for Elsie Foster, a relative of the first postmaster there.

Some communities were named after distant cities: Mishawaka for the city in Indiana, Tolovana Park for a place in Alaska, and Chadwell after the place in England where the postmaster's wife was born.

About thirty percent of the names in Clatsop County were related to some physical feature of the area. Names referring to plants and animals are Tansy Point, Alderbrook, Alder Creek, Dogwood Creek, Fernhill, Ivy, Onion Peak, Vinemaple, Silver Point which was named for the silver color of the spruce trees, Elk Creek, Fishhawk and Cockscomb Hill. Some names are simply descriptive. Hamlet is probably the best example. (That is unless someone can prove that it was named after Shakespeare's play.) Others were Arch Cape, Cannon Beach, Circle Creek, Blind Slough, Big Creek, Tongue Point, and Seaside which was actually named for Ben Holladay's Seaside (or Sea Side) House.

About fifteen percent of the names were originally used by the local Indians or named after them. These include Cullaby, Ecola, Klaskanine,

Moosmoos, Neacoxie, Necanicum, Neawanna, Nehalem, Skipanon, Tenasillihe, Walluski, Wauna, Wawa, Wahanna, Clatsop, Cathlamet and Tillamook. Indian names were widely used in the early years, but disagreement about the spelling caused much frustration and more familiar sounding names were adopted. Dewitt Clinton Ireland, former editor of several Astoria newspapers, often complained of the tongue-twisting Indian names he could never remember how to spell. As a result, we now use the name Commercial Street in Astoria instead of Squemoqhe. The early land claims referred to Tolosqua River; it was corrupted to Tilly Jane and Tilly Ann and is now Big Creek. This process was reversed in the case of Swan Bay, the

name commonly used in the late 1840s; it is now Cathlamet Bay.

TOWNSITE PROMOTERS

In her book, *Some Of Her Life Experiences*, Dr. Bethenia Owens-Adair wrote about the reasons that she and her husband platted the townsite of Sunnymead, which was located southwest of the Port of Astoria's airport in Warrenton. Colonel John Adair was convinced that this property, much of which was under water twice a day, would be worth a fortune, if it were diked. He spent much of the money his wife earned in her medical practice toward this end. Her consolation was the thought that the names of her family members would be perpetuated in this property. Hill Street was named after

NO HILLS TO CLIMB IN SUNNYMEAD

The surface of the whole tract is absolutely level, and there is no grading to be done before a lot is in readiness for building. Convenient to Astoria by motor or regular passenger trains on the Astoria & Columbia River Railway, it makes a most desirable place for a home. Property is cheap, considering the above location, and the surroundings are both healthy and pleasant. One can reach Sunnymead from the Astoria depot in 15 minutes time by motor and the fare is so reasonable that it makes it possible to live

IN BEAUTIFUL SUNNYMEAD

and do business in Astoria. The plot is well watered by fresh water streams and the main streets are now being laid with wooden pavement. A new little depot is located on the property, where all trains stop.

For the next few days a limited number of lots will be placed on the market at a reduced price, and the terms of sale made so easy that they are within the reach of all.

For particulars call on or address

JOHN ADAIR,

Astoria, Oregon

See the Astoria Land & Investment Company's Advertisement

her son, Adair Creek for her husband, Mattie Belle Creek for her adopted daughter, Vera Creek for her granddaughter, and Victor Street for her grandson. The Adairs recorded their plat on February 5, 1890. Their efforts at promotion failed, and Sunnymeade today exists only as a name on the old maps. The promoters of the townsite of Williamsport were more successful.

An article in the *Daily Astorian* of December 26, 1879 advertised the development of a new townsite, named Williamsport after its promoter, John Williamson. It was described as follows:

Williamsport is situated on the sunny slope of Youngs bay, just across the peninsula opposite Shively's Astoria. The tract which all will be laid off into blocks and lots this week, embraces fifty acres owned by Mr. John Williamson, adjacent to a larger tract suitable for any desirable expansion, owned by Messrs. W.W. Parker and J.G. Hustler. Williamsport has three living streams of water upon it affording an abundant supply of water for 150,000 inhabitants.

The flats in front and the back have a gradual, easy slope to the base of Cockscomb Hill. The harbor is a mile wide with deep water anchorage of half a mile. Mr. Williamson proposes to deed a portion of it in acres to the railroad company for car and machine shops and will deed each alternate lot to any bona fide citizen free of cost except for expenses of survey, deed, etc. nominally perhaps \$10, who will guarantee to build there within a specified time.

Williamsport lies direct on the line of the route of the Astoria and Winnemucca railroad, let it come into the city from either point, Smiths or Tongue. In fact there are good arguments to show it should travel both.

Already one house has been constructed in Williamsport and the lumber is on the ground for another house. The main street is the present county road. Mr. Williamson will lay out all business streets to a width of seventy feet wide. Lots will be 50 by 100 feet in size and eight lots to the block. ♦

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**Become a member of the
Clatsop County Historical Society**

Annual CCHS memberships are:

\$15 Student, \$25 Individual, \$50 Family (or outside the USA),
\$75 Contributing, \$100 Patron, \$200 Business, \$250 Sustaining,
\$500 Benefactor, \$1,000 Life Member, and \$1,000 Corporate Member

CLATSOP COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1618 Exchange Street, Astoria, Oregon 97103

Phone (503) 325-2203

Fort Stevens Cemetery



Photo courtesy of Thelma Clark

by Miriam M. Martin

This photograph was taken at Fort Stevens, Oregon in the spring of 1906. Members of the party are Sergeant and Mrs. Davidson, Sgt. and Mrs. K.K. Gandee, Sgt. and Mrs. B.C. Walton and baby daughter, Thelma (now Mrs. C.J. Clark of Astoria), all then residents of Hammond, Oregon; also present were Private Jim Davidson of Fort Stevens, and brother of Sgt. Davidson and Ruth and Miriam Meibohm of Astoria who were visiting their sister Mrs. Eva Walton.

Eva, born in England, Ruth and Miriam, born in Astoria, were three of the four daughters of Gerhart and Elizabeth Meibohm. The fourth daughter, Grace, was not present at the time the photograph was made.

Following a Sunday dinner at the home of the Davidson's, the party entered Fort Stevens through the "Green Gate" which was on the road to Hammond. The railroad tracks were to the north and a wooded area to the south as the party walked westward. At the end of the wooded area lay a large open field from which could be viewed some of the barracks and officers' quarters of the fort. They party turned from the road and crossed the field heading south-west toward the hills. They came to a small hut and it was the man who resided there who took the group picture.

Jim Davidson with some difficulty pulled the buggy up the hill through the sandy soil. It was necessary for Ruth and Miriam Meibohm to stabilize the buggy to keep it from tipping over in the soft ground. The party proceeded to the top of the hill where a small cemetery was maintained.

Sgt. Davidson's first wife, who had died some time previously, during the birth of their first child, was buried there along with the infant. The second Mrs. Davidson, who was pregnant at the time of this picture, was sent by her husband to Tennessee for the delivery of their child. She returned with their child following the safe delivery to again reside in Hammond with her husband.

Stories from Clarence Sigurdson's 1973 book, *Raised By The Sea*

Warrenton vs. Hammond

It seems in those days [about 1915], the kids had a tendency to fight more than nowadays. But there was less mean vandalism, shoplifting, use of alcohol, and drugs than nowadays. . .

Once Gerald Malarkey lost his horse for about a week. We all looked for it in the evenings after school. Finally Roy Vanice, on return from delivering a load of wood in Hammond, reported that he had seen the horse there and the kids of Hammond were riding it.

Gerald organized a group of about six or seven of us to go to Hammond on Saturday, beat up every kid we saw, and

bring back the horse.

As we got into Hammond, we spotted groups of two or three kids at a time. As we ran toward them, they ran into their houses. This made us more brave than ever. So we decided to beat up on the men also. As we got to the center of town, we spotted half a dozen men. We took after them on the run, but to our surprise they did not retreat and they looked at us in wonderment. Before we got to them, we turned chicken.

[Clarence Sigurdson and his friends found the horse and peaceably returned to Warrenton.]♦

The B.B. gun

One Christmas our brother, Alex, gave three of us brothers a Daisy air rifle and a total of five pounds of B.B. shot. I think we shot at almost everything we saw. But the most fun was when we took turns running from

the garden gate to inside the barn while the others peppered us with B.B. shot. We held our coats up to protect our heads. We were far enough away so the shot did not penetrate the skin, but left a small bruised spot. ♦

Run on the bank

The Elk Saloon in Warrenton was run by Jake Bosshart, Sr. in the early years of the century. It was a popular place for people to congregate and tell wild stories. One story is the following:

It was told around that the Astoria banks were having a hard time and no one could withdraw from their account more than one hundred dollars in any one day. Jake [Bosshart], Sr., the bartender, heard it and decided to do something about it right away.

So he took the Astoria and Columbia River Railway train to Astoria and went into the bank. The teller, Chas. Higgins, greeted him as usual and wanted to know what he could do for him.

Jake was excited and demanded all his money right now.

The teller asked him how he wanted it. Jake said, "Can I get it all?" and was assured he could. So Jake said "If I can get it, I don't want it. But if I can't, I want it all right now." ♦

The Oregon National Guard Camp



This aerial photo of Camp Clatsop, renamed Camp Rilea in 1959, was probably taken from the ocean at top left; Warrenton is at top right. Almost every year since 1927, three to four thousand people gathered at Camp Clatsop for two weeks of close order drill, artillery practice, athletics, games, and other activities. 50,000 people would arrive to be entertained by the annual review and combat demonstration. See his article on page 27, "On Clatsop Plains."

on Clatsop Plains



CCHS Photo #5720-036

taken sometime in the 1930s. The ocean beach is at left; the Columbia River meets the
r thousand National Guardsmen from across the state arrived by troop train or truck
s, battle drill and then a two-day bivouac in a nearby valley. On Visitors' Day, some
stration that took place on the same ancient beach ridges described by John Gill in

A Love Story That Has Lasted 73 Years

by Ivy Miller Jackson

It was while visiting my sister, Myrtle, in Chinook, Washington, a small village on the Columbia River, that I first saw the young man wearing a sweater with a college emblem. We were going down the boardwalks to the grocery store while he was coming down the other side of the street. Myrtle said, "There is that Jackson boy, just back from Syracuse University and thinks he is so smart! I hope you never meet him." The next Sunday, we went to church and there, singing in a quartet, was that "smart boy."

About this time a reporter from the *Oregon Journal* came to Chinook to get a story for his paper. This story would be about how the women were working in jobs that the men had done before leaving to go to World War I. In Chinook, the people made their living fishing with salmon traps along the river. This man persuaded my sister and me to let him take our pictures in the fish traps. We pulled on overalls and rubber hip boots. A boat took us into the fish traps where we were to gaff the salmon and pull them into the boat. Our pictures subsequently appeared in the Portland newspaper. While we were in the trap, a boatload of boys went by, shouting and waving to us. Among the bunch I spotted the "smart boy" I wasn't supposed to meet.

After the weekend visit with my sister in Chinook, I returned to Astoria, Oregon, just across the Columbia River, where I clerked for the Ross-Higgins Company store. Soon after I arrived, a young man in overalls came in and went to the back of the store. One of my co-workers informed me that he was the new delivery boy. He looked familiar,



Photo courtesy of the author

*Photograph taken on the day
Laurence and Ivy Jackson were married,
October 19, 1920.*

and sure enough, he was that "smart boy." One day he stopped by my counter and asked me to go with him to a baseball game at Knappa. I was speechless, wondering what my sister would think. O well! She had followed her husband to San Francisco where the army had sent him, so I accepted, hoping she wouldn't find out. This was our first date, and also the first of many to baseball games. Laurence played for various teams over the years such as the Columbia Club, Centennial, Elks, and Thiel Brothers. Baseball and music were his life [There are photographs of Laurence Jackson in Wally Palmberg's new book, *Toward One Flag*.]

When the soldiers came home at the end of the war, we girls were told that we should give up our jobs to the soldiers. I was then out of work. Soon, however, I had a job at the Fish Hawk Logging Company in the Nehalem Valley. The company was owned by the husband of my girlfriend, and I was

offered a job as waitress at the camp. In the meantime, Laurence had been released from the army and was now operating a fruit stand at Seaside. It was a couple years later when Laurence was working for a grocery in Astoria that he came to Medford where I was staying with my mother, and on October 19, 1920, we were married. We took the train back to Astoria and lived in his apartment. Those early years were rough, to say the least, and sometimes I wondered if my sister wasn't right. The only good thing that happened was the birth of our darling daughter, Jean, in 1921. We had just opened a fruit and produce store in the same building with the fire department on a block near where the John Jacob Astor Hotel is now. We carried no fire insurance thinking the fire department would protect us. But the fire of 1922 came along and burned twenty-four blocks with our business right in the middle. We not only owed for the merchandise, but were building a home which was only half done. Then came a little good luck. My family offered to help us out.

My older sister Ruby had married a man who owned a large merchandise store, two cheese factories and a butcher shop in a little town in Southern Oregon, known as Gold Beach. They called to say they would give Laurence employment and a house in which to live if we would come to Gold Beach. This sounded like a good solution to our problems, so we accepted.

We lived in Gold Beach for two years while Laurence worked in the store, formed an orchestra that played for dances, gave violin lessons and, of course, formed a baseball team. It was only after all our debts were paid that we went back to Astoria where Laurence opened a wholesale fruit and produce market which he ran for nineteen years. During World War II, we did really well. We supplied the logging camps, seining grounds, restaurants, stores and the Tillamook Lighthouse. The latter had to have their supplies packed in heavy containers to withstand the heavy bumping as the supply boat tried to get them aboard the rock.



Photo courtesy of the author

The house at 970 Irving, between 21st and 22nd Streets, after the slide in January 1950. The roofline of the house still appeared level, but the house was damaged and had to be torn down. There were then six houses on both sides of Irving between 21st and 22nd Streets. There are none today.

In the early 1930s, we purchased a summer store at Seaside, Oregon [a grocery store on Downing Avenue]. Our daughter, Jean, and I operated this business for ten years. The store was opened every day of the week from June until September. On weekends that "smart boy" would come down to help us and twice a month, I would go back to Astoria to balance the books for Laurence's produce business. I was at our home on Irving Avenue the night the Japanese bombed nearby Fort Stevens. From our large window in the living room, I saw the flash of light over the mouth of the Columbia River. The bombs hit no targets and the men at the fort did not return fire for fear of showing their position. After that, when I drove back and forth at night, I had to put black cloth over the headlights of my car.

In 1949, we built a new house about three blocks from the house on Irving Avenue in which we had lived for twenty-five years. We intended to sell our old four-bedroom house to pay for our new home. Then disaster struck again. After many days of heavy rains in January 1950, the whole hillside began slowly sliding down the hill. The older home was right in the middle of the slide and was a total loss. About that time, my husband closed the produce business and took a job as office manager for Fisher Brothers Hardware Company where I had worked for many years. Twelve years later, he retired and two years after that, I also retired. We began our travels and that was the best part of our lives. We made two trips to Europe, two to Honolulu and many trips around the United States and Canada.

When I think over the accomplishments of that boy from Syracuse, I am glad that I didn't follow my sister's advice. Laurence sang in the Presbyterian choir for fifty years, played violin in the symphony orchestra, directed the fife and drum corps for the Veterans of Foreign Wars,

and was a captain in the Oregon State Guard where he instructed young men for service in the Second World War.

We have sold all our Oregon property, the house on Irving Avenue and the Seaside store. Our daughter, Jean, who is a music teacher, and her husband, Tom Hall, have five acres on the Mojave Desert near Yucca Valley in California. We now live in a small guest house near them. On October 19, 1993, we will have been married seventy three (73) years. My husband is 97 and I am 93.

My sister, Myrtle, must have been wrong for I've never regretted that I met that "smart boy" from Syracuse! ♦

Ivy Miller Jackson was born on a homestead on the Pistol River in 1899. Her mother, Martha Susannah Forgey, was born near Grants Pass in 1865, and married Edward Miller; they had twelve children. Ivy was their tenth child and is the only one still living. Ivy's grandparents crossed the plains in a covered wagon drawn by two oxen in 1847, twelve years before Oregon was a state.



Photo courtesy of the author

Laurence and Ivy Jackson on their 70th wedding anniversary in 1990 in California.

On Clatsop Plains

by John Gill

This article was published in the January 1908 issue of Sunset Magazine. The spelling and punctuation of the original have been retained. Nekanakum is now generally spelled Necanicum; Netul is Netel, now known as the Lewis and Clark; and the Wahana is now known as the Neawanna.

This pleasant land is in the extreme northwest corner of Oregon. Young's Bay, two miles across, and running southeast four miles to its head in Young's River, separates the plains from Astoria. The Columbia River, of whose estuary Young's Bay is an affluent, flows along the northern side, joining the sea ten miles west of Astoria. Point Adams is the cape at the river mouth on the Oregon side, extending a mile or two beyond the mean coast line. Following the shore southward sixteen miles the beach extends, broken only by the entrance of the Nekanakum, to Tillamook Head, the southern limit of the plain, and from the root of Tillamook a chain of hills running northeast to Astoria from the eastern boundary of the low lands.

HISTORY OF THE PLAINS

The first description we have of the Clatsop country is found in the story of the voyages of Captain John Meares, in the *Felice Aventurier*. Meares was trading on the northern coast for furs and having passed a miserable winter in Nootka Sound, far up on the west side

of Vancouver Island, he sailed southward in search of a more clement harbor. On his way he entered and named the Straits of San Juan de Fuca, observed the entrances of Gray's Harbor and Willapa, attempted to enter the Columbia, and failing, gave the name to the north headland which it still bears--Cape Disappointment. On July 7, 1788, he was coasting along the Clatsop shore. From the deck of his little vessel he could look inland here and there between the sand dunes and see the green, inviting plains. He speaks of his delight at beholding grassy fields, to which for years he had been a stranger, and dwells upon the beauty of the land from which he was barred by the sands and breakers.

LEWIS AND CLARK

To Americans the country was made known by Lewis and Clark, who in 1805 spent the months of January, February and March in the plains country, at Fort Clatsop, on the Netul River (now called Lewis and Clark) five miles southwest of Astoria.

To Oregonians the journal of the explorers written while at Fort Clatsop is highly interesting. Frequent journeys were made in the vicinity, as far as to the south side of Tillamook Head, up the Clatsop (now Nekanakum) and along the shore of the Columbia. The principal subsistence of the party was the elk and deer killed in the plains and adjoining mountains, and salmon, smelt and herring caught in the rivers. They did not despise even the whale blubber,

which they procured in small quantity from the Clatsops and Tillamooks, and went themselves more than twenty miles to the source of supply, through the morasses and fens and beautiful prairies and over the heights of Tillamook to Ecola (the Indian word for whale), which still bears the name.

Close to the shore, half a mile northwest of Seaside House, the party made salt from sea water by boiling in kettles on hollow cairns of stone. These salt cairns were unknown for almost a century, being rediscovered in 1900. Captain H.D. Sanborn of Portland enclosed the ancient remains of the salt works with a stout fence.

Captain Clark writes eloquently of the beauty of the country. He went several times up to the summit of Tillamook Head, where he had a wide view of the sea, in hope of seeing some vessel coming to the Columbia for furs, but no ship came in the time of his stay. The brig *Lydia* entered the river only a few days after the departure of Lewis and Clark on their return across the mountains, and the *Lydia* found Indians wearing medals which had been given them by the explorers.

OTHER EARLY EXPLORERS AND TRADERS

The Clatsop Indians who dwelt in the country of the plains saw white traders and ships in the river occasionally after the departure of Lewis and Clark. To Captain Hall of the *Lydia* they gave a copy of the proclamation left by the explorers on the log walls of Fort Clatsop. A trader named Baker visited the harbor we now call Baker's Bay, on the Washington shore above Fort Canby. These trading vessels remained but a short time in the river and on account of the massacre of the crew of the Boston at Nootka, and other Indian treacheries, the traders seldom left the ships. It is pretty certain that the first white men in the Clatsop

country after 1806 were Ross and Pillet, members of the Astor expedition, who were received hospitably by the Clatsops, March 30-31, 1811, when they were seeking a suitable place for establishing the Astor fort. They found all the lands of the south shore at that time low and swampy, overflowed by tides, which are now walled out, and the lowlands redeemed by dikes.

The occupation of Astoria by the company sent out by John Jacob Astor brought the Clatsop again into friendly contact with the Americans, British and Canadians. The Canadian voyagers had small prejudice against marital alliances with the women of the Clatsops and Chinooks, and the Scotchmen of the Astor party and Americans, also, soon followed the enticing example. The half-breed Indians of the Columbia in the early part of the last century bore many names illustrious in France and Britain. As the employees of the fur companies completed their terms of service or grew too old for the strenuous life of the mountain and portage, they set up housekeeping in semi-Indian style on some spot the trapper had selected during his time of service. Tea Prairie, French Prairie, Tualatin and Clatsop Plains were cheerful openings in the pervading forest, and selected as homes by settlers as early as 1830. In 1840 the Willamette Mission of the Methodist Church established a mission on Clatsop Plains four miles south of the mouth of the Skipanon River. A year or two later a Presbyterian mission was established in the same neighborhood, both being near the station known as Morrison on the Astoria and Columbia River Railroad. An ancient cemetery--the Old Plains Mission burying ground, lies in the bosom of a green valley near Morrison. In it rest the earliest settlers of this vicinity and the missionaries who built their little log churches here nearly seventy years ago. This cemetery is still

preferred as a place of burial, many Astorians having been buried here, ten miles from their city, and it is still the common burial place for the plains people as far south as Seaside, ten miles away.

EARLY APPEARANCE OF THE AREA

The open, unforested country of Clatsop Plains was about thirty square miles in extent, being about four miles from Young's Bay west to the sea, and extending in a narrowing angle to the forest at Gearhart. South of this forest again are a few small prairie openings along the Wahana and Nekanakum. The western edge, fronting the sea, is a little more than a belt of drifting sand, for a half mile inland, from Point Adams to Seaside.

The early settlers took up large tracts. A square mile was the usual extent of a "claim," and there were not very many settlers in Clatsop when the plains were "settled up." The homesteads were all east of a line drawn south from Tansy Point, the site of the Hotel Flavel. West of such a line the lands are poorer, and the long dunes are swept by the winds, these same ridges providing shelter for the somewhat lower and more level lands eastward.

EARLY SETTLEMENTS

There was a village on the Skipanon two miles south of the Columbia and six southwest of Astoria, and another at Clatsop six miles south of Skipanon. The latter place was formerly called Lexington. [One] house... was built in the old village of Lexington in 1850 by Mr. A.C. Wirt, who still lives in the old place. The three thousand bricks in its chimney cost one hundred and sixty-five dollars, and the sawed lumber used in its construction cost seventy-five dollars per thousand.

Other ancient homesteads lie pleasantly along the road running south

from Skipanon to Seaside--the homes of the Morrisons, Carnahans, Taylors, Wests, Hobson, Gearys [Grays?], Butterfields, Byrds and other old pioneer families. The Hon. John Minto, of Salem, still hale and sound at eighty-five, came courting Martha Morrison at the old farm on Neacoxie in 1845 and took her to Salem in 1847, where they lived nearly sixty years together, beloved and honored.

BEGINNING THE TRIP BY RAILROAD

Crossing Young's Bay by the three-mile trestle from Astoria, we enter the plains a little west of the mouth of the Lewis and Clark River, leaving the rumbling trestle for the level, green lowlands known as Sunnymead. The river, six miles wide, rolling in long, gentle billows--the pulse of the great sea outside--stretches north and west to the beautiful hills of the Washington shore. We can look back across the bay and see Astoria with its swaying ships at anchor, and Knappton far away across the river to the northeast, with its canopy of smoke from the lumber mills; the bold height of Scarboro Head, with a long line of shining, distant houses close along shore marking the site of the ancient Indian capital of the Chinooks and stretching westward ten miles farther, the blue hills fall against the ramparts of Cape Disappointment. Hundreds of sails, sparkling or darkling along the blue river, the salmon fishers going out or returning home; the level line of the open sea between the Cape and Point Adams--a wide vista, indeed--and before us, west and southward, the plains of Clatsop. These pleasant green fields, now populous with grazing herds, were miry swamps in the early days. Dikes have been built along the shores of the Columbia, Lewis and Clark, Skipanon and other creeks, and the lands so redeemed from tidal overflow are the most productive grazing lands of the Pacific Coast.

Three miles run, taking us gradually away from the Columbia, brings us to Warrenton, the successor of ancient Lexington, a thriving town on the navigable waters of the Skipanon.

From Warrenton a branch of the railroad runs north and west, coming again to the margin of the Columbia, passing Flavel and Hammond and terminating at Fort Stevens, which occupies the extreme northwestern corner of Oregon. Here is one of the three important forts protecting the entrance to the Columbia, and from Fort Stevens also runs the great jetty or breakwater, four miles long, northwestward, which narrows the mouth of the river, and when completed will fix the wandering channels of its outlet.

South from Warrenton the railroad follows closely the line of the old pioneer settlements, but we will leave the rail and take the old plains road. One can travel by rail anywhere, but not often will he find a walk so inviting as the dozen miles or more from Warrenton to Seaside.

EXPLORING ON FOOT

You will wonder, as we set out upon our tramp, at the smooth, solid plank road, now a bit decayed, leading off to southward. It is the reminder of the old times when Seaside was reached by steamers from Astoria to Skipanon, and coaches from that port down the plains road.

Warrenton extends to where old Lexington begins. The latter hamlet is on an old beach ridge, now greenly turfed with grass. The Skipanon river, deep and still, passes through the old village. The sandy road leads to its center, then turns westward, descending to the railroad and passing the little Church of Saint Margaret's by the Sea, which stands quite alone, looking westward toward the downs.

Our second mile leads us, by the

old plank road, through a little wilderness of alder, spruce and willow growing from a morass that lies between Skipanon and the next ridge westward. Along this road in March at either side stand thick ranks of the golden club with its great pale yellow, callalike spathes, thousands of them. They cluster around all these fens, the most striking, brilliant flowers of the year, and their heavy odor weights the calm air of the Spring evening.

The road mounts the long dune before us and we emerge from the thickets of the swamp. Once fairly on the ridge we see that it is paralleled by another, half a mile away at westward, and in the hollow between are more green fields and long narrow lakes, and a few far-away old farmsteads. The country north towards Stevens is quite thickly wooded and a few scattered thickets cut off the view to southward, but the grass of the gently sloping dune leads the eye to the thick woods of the little valley below, and we look across the thick-set treetops and follow the wavering line of the wooded marsh far away southward. Passing the scattered groves that skirt the way, at three miles from Warrenton we come out upon the open plain. Then the beautiful rank of blue mountains looms far away on the southern horizon, the mountains that lie between the sources of Nekanakum and Nehalem waters.

VIEW TO THE SOUTH

The plain spreads far and wide before us, ten miles or nearly to the forest of Gearhart. Gold and purple mingle with its emerald, where cloud shadows and gleams of sunshine traverse its broad expanse. And though at no great height above the general country, it is as open to our gaze as the sea from some high headland. If it be March the larks are numerous, and from the fence rails along the road they launch themselves out above the pasture

with such joyous, thrilling songs that one's very heart expands to hear them. Even in January on a sunny day one will sing in every furlong of this road. There is a little field amid the forest between Gearhart and Wahanna where I heard such a chorus of larks and blackbirds last Easter Sunday that I lacked neither church nor choir nor chanting congregations. It was a startling thing, to come suddenly out of the mighty forest aisles, dark, cold and silent, and passing the little sunlit meadow to hear that unceasing song from a thousand bird throats. There was not silence for a second, and passing onward to a bend in the road, it was gone as suddenly as it came.

And in March the sandy road is packed firm by the beating rains that have poured for weeks. The clouds will be moving slowly, in open order, massive and grand in silver and purple over us, and in the distance, seeming to inlay the heavens with a patterned canopy of pearl. That musical outcry of a hundred bugle notes is from the arrow-shaped flock of wild geese journeying by slow stages northward over Clatsop to Alaska.

ANCIENT BEACH RIDGES

The railroad runs below at the left, out of sight for a mile or two, but near Morrison the highway approaches the railroad again. The latter follows an ancient beach ridge similar to the one on which the highway runs for many miles.

These ridges run with strange exactness north and south. There are six of them, the outer one lying against the sea and sloping sharply down to the beach. This outer one is higher than the others, rising fifty feet or more, with strange crests and hollows, tufted with rank grass, wild pea vines and strawberry plants. Cuplike hollows drift full of pale yellow sands cut from the face of the outer bluff and borne inward

by the gales.

From the top of the western dune one looks inland over all the open plain and outward upon the unbroken sea. The gales have smothered with drifting sand many hundred acres west and north of Morrison where fifty years ago the pasture lands extended far toward the sea.

The growth of land westward along the jetty is now extending the shore along this waste, and the grass is creeping westward again.

THE NEACOXIE

An interesting stream running through the plains is the Neacoxie, which rises in Cullaby Lake, a long, narrow water a mile east of the railroad and southeast of Clatsop station. The Neacoxie flows a little west of north from the lake seven miles, through some of the most fertile lands of the plains, and then bends like a hairpin back upon its course, flowing south between the outer dune and the next easterly one to its outlet in the bay at the mouth of the Wahana and Nekanakum. The course of this stream is nearly twenty miles, and its outlet is hardly three miles distant from its source.

By the drifting of sand west of Carnahan's, the bed of the Neacoxie has been gradually filled and raised until its choked current overflowed the lands near the lake. To relieve this condition a canal has been dug through the bottoms to the Skipanon River, and now much of the water that used to seek the sea near Gearhart is led to the Columbia near Warrenton.

We come upon the Neacoxie not far south of Morrison, just after passing the old plains cemetery spoken of above. The roadside from there to Carnahan is thickly hedged with Scotch broom for two miles. Here and there the broom has intruded into neglected fields and old apple trees, smothered in its growth, scarcely reach above it. In May

those acres and miles of broom flare out in rich yellow, and all the roadside is hedged with gold.

This broom is, of course, an exotic, and Mr. Hobson, one of the earliest settlers, is said to have sent to Scotland for the plants which have taken possession of many acres of good land.

The road follows the ridge east of the Neacoxie to Carnahan Station and crosses the stream there. As it winds among its willows and alders, with the yellow marsh lilies spreading upon the placid waters and the old rustic bridge spanning the stream with its dark shadows, the Neacoxie is a temptation for artists.

Rising from the level of Neacoxie to the next long dune-ridge, the southern portion of the plains comes into nearer view. Tillamook Head and the Nehalem range are miles nearer than at Skipanon. The old farms, set far apart, look substantial and comfortable-broad, low houses with huge barns, surrounded by venerable and unprofitable apple orchards, are built near the eastern side of the dunes, for shelter against the storms. These long-inhabited farmsteads give the country its peculiar charm. They suggest earlier generations that have tilled these fields and loved these fair broad prairies and blue mountains. The cattle and sheep roam far and wide westward over the parallel ridges to the seaside. . .

From the vales between them, the dunes rise about thirty feet in gentle swells, somewhat steeper on their eastern sides, like the shape of the great billows a little farther west of us.

And from the top of each [dune], the gaze wanders with delight over a country new and strange, yet seemingly familiar, also. You need not to be told that these great swells, each many miles long, are billows, too, cast up by the sea which is doing the same work farther out and building new ridges. All the country, in view from Tillamook eastward to the hills between us and the

old Netul River, and north to Astoria, has been thus built in by the sea, which once formed a bay reaching far up Nekanakum, and smote at the foot of the Netul hills and sent great billows of the main against the base of Coxcomb hill above Astoria.

One of these great ridges, the second from the sea, is almost precisely a geometric line from West's farm to the forest of Gearhart, four miles. In that long sweep its ridge is not ten feet out of a continuous straight line. Here again you may behold the wisdom of the untutored ox. You and I walk on the summit of the ridge, leaning stoutly against the southwest gale which drives our coattails and skirts so closely about our limbs that walking is a labor. The oxen go in long single file a few yards below us on the east side of the ridge, and the gale is turned completely from them.

WILDFLOWERS

These miles of down pasture are too beautiful for our poor language when in April the great tall violets, big and sweet as the best we have produced by cultivation, spread in purple masses--so dense an army of them that whole roods of land are blue and purple--revel in the gentle breezes of Spring and toss their pretty heads at the wandering winds. And cloth of gold bedecks the plain where myriad buttercups lift their shining yellow faces, so childlike innocent. And the wild strawberry blooms are as big as a half dollar piece; I have tried them and found them to overlap the coin. [Note: a rood is a quarter of an acre.]

Down on the golf links at Gearhart in May grow strange lilies, draconian flowers, startling in their adderlike spots and stripes, a flower of greenish black exterior cup, and within, as it were, coals of fire. This, botanists call the gillia.

GEARHART WOODS

The road, or the air, the freedom of the broad open plain so sparsely settled, seem to renew the vigor with each succeeding mile. We are ten miles now from our starting point, with the savanna behind us, and entering the Gearhart woods.

These begin at the southern edge of the prairie with infant trees--hemlocks, pines and spruces that feather down to the very grass. The hemlock of this region seems the perfection of grace and loveliness. It is an airy green, and its pendulous branches and spiring top make it a very spirit of a tree. Wash your hands in the clear cold runnel beside the road, and you may dry them in the twigs of the hemlock as nicely as in a Turkish towel.

The spruces are more rugged. Their twigs are feathered with thick-set swords in miniature, pale blue as seen from below, and these swordlets will stab you a hundred times if you grasp a branch.

At the north side of the woods the trees grow straight, protected from the winds, and are pygmies compared to their mighty brethren in the midst of the colony. These rise two hundred feet or more, the columnar trunks soaring far on high before they push out their dense interwoven canopy of branches. They have carried this crown upward with their growth for centuries, and now their shapely trunks of a gray-purple color stand solemnly straight and tall in their own shadow. There are surely few groves more noble than this at Gearhart.

In the almost sunless depths of this forest the sallal and huckleberry have learned to thrive, and their pale glossy foliage is lit in long summer days by straying shafts and bars of sunlight that bore through the dome of branches. The paths are softer than any velvet carpet, with the rich trailing moss, and the kinnikannick vines running everywhere, with brilliant red berries.

Passing through this forest to the

southward, where it begins at the shore of the little bay which receives Wahana, Neacoxie and Nekanakum rivers, the outer trees are mostly pines, which thrive in the sand. These grow taller as they lean against the great spruces, cedars and hemlocks, but all the southern and western trees, exposed to the prevailing winds, lean far out of perpendicular to northward.

GEARHART SETTLEMENT

At Gearhart the summer colony begins and is spreading fast. Its residents will tell you that no other place along the shore can compare with it as a summer resort. The older houses are prettily set in the scattered pines at the western edge of the forest, and thus for a few hundred yards the green wiry grass of the golf links reaches out to the high ridge overlooking the sea. On this ridge a new colony is establishing itself, to have the full glory of the sea always before it. A very large hotel will be built on the shore ridge for the visitors of this coming summer.

With a boat from the bay beach of Gearhart, we could follow the estuary of Nekanakum a short two miles to Seaside. The bay is delightful for boating and bathing, though it may be well to know the changing channels of the lower river where it struggles against the wide, mighty tides that thrust it backwards daily and nightly. The Nekanakum at ebb will eat up a strip of beach twenty yards wide and a hundred long.

Our afternoon's walk is at an end, but we shall do well another day to follow the beautiful Nekanakum miles up its romantic valley, and take the fly rods with us, for, though greatly overfished, the stream seems inexhaustible, and the skillful hand will lure many a prize worth the taking from its deep, dark pools under the great spotted alders, or the musical rushing shallows of its gravel bars. ♦

Memories of the Fernhill Grade School

by Lawrence V. Parker

PIONEER DAYS

In the 1890s, the grade school in the John Day-Fernhill area was located on the Parker Farm owned by my great grandfather, Hiram B. Parker. It was a one-room school with no running water and with an outside "privy." As the number of students grew, it became apparent that a new school was needed. In 1899, the school building on the Parker Farm was abandoned when a new school was built in the Fernhill area. The new school contained two rooms over a full basement built above the ground level. Each room was heated by a wood stove. (In later years a wood furnace was installed in the basement.) The school also had outside privies, replaced by indoor plumbing in later

years. Indoor plumbing was never installed on the first floor where the classrooms were located, but only in the basement.

Before the automobile was invented, the wagon road going up the Columbia River ran parallel to the dike in the John Day area, leading to a wooden bridge that crossed the John Day River about one mile upriver from the bridge location today. The wagon road on the Fernhill side, east of the river, passed the John Lewis Ranch and circled up the hill past the Fernhill school. I'm sure Fernhill was a thriving area in early days as the community had a post office and a store. The Fernhill Post Office was first established in 1879 and discontinued in 1881. It was



Photo courtesy of Mrs. Laverne Wahlstrom

Fernhill Grade School (1939). The basketball court is on the right.

re-established in 1901 and discontinued a second time on May 31, 1922. The records show that the second post office was located on the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad property not far from the present Fernhill Road entrance. Mary A. Dennis was the first postmistress. Two long-time residents of Fernhill recall a post office located at the Lewis house. The mail was probably picked up at the railroad station near the river and brought to the Lewis house for distribution. A long time resident of Fernhill also recalls a store at the Lewis house in the early 1900s which sold pencils and paper to students at the Fernhill School. I have over fifty postcards stamped with the "Fernhill" postmark. One of the cards sold at the store said, "Greetings from Fernhill, Oreg."

My dad, Peary Parker, attended the first grade in the new Fernhill School in the year 1900. For more than fifty years, over 250 students entered this same "Hall of Learning" including two generations of Parker children. After doing his farm chores, Peary had a two-mile walk to school. One of his early teachers was Anne Lewis. In later years she became the superintendent of schools in Clatsop County. My dad told stories of his early school days; he was full of mischief. One of his worst pranks was pouring red pepper on the hot stove, causing everyone to cry and sneeze. He was severely reprimanded; Anne Lewis remembered the incident thirty years later.

In the early 1920's, the new Columbia River Highway was built which by-passed much of the Fernhill area. This new highway speeded traffic in the area, which was probably why the Fernhill Post Office closed in 1922. The wooden bridge on the old wagon road became unsafe and was torn down about 1930.

ATTENDING FERNHILL GRADE SCHOOL

I entered Fernhill Grade School in 1927. My brother, Howard, started in 1926, Verdun in 1930, and Clarence in 1934. Our father was on the school board throughout the sixteen years my three brothers and I were at Fernhill, plus several additional years (sometimes as chairman.) Despite his long hours working on the farm and in the building trades during the depression, he found time to serve on the school board to support the education of his family. Because it was difficult to find people to serve on the board, he kept volunteering his time. He was a born leader who took an active part in many organizations. He was secretary-treasurer of the John Day Telephone Company. In 1933 he was chosen chairman in a drive to build a community hall which is still standing. Because of his connections in the building trades, he was a leader in building it; however, it was a community effort in which all the men and women worked very hard for several years.

I have difficulty remembering very much of my first four years of school; however, I know I had good teachers. Our principal was Mrs. Elsa Simonsen; she taught the upper four grades. She left the school before I entered her room. Students who attended Mrs. Simonsen's classes say she was a good teacher who was dedicated to giving her students the best education possible. I am told that when one student was forced to leave school before graduation, Mrs. Simonsen gave him special tutoring so he could receive his diploma later. She was also very much involved in student activities.

Each morning we formed two lines in front of the school steps. The American flag was raised and we gave our "pledge of allegiance to the flag."

Then we marched up the stairs and into the classroom like little Trojans, keeping in step with the music. It taught us discipline and respect for our nation's flag.

During the summer of 1930, the school board hired two new teachers, Miss Belva Johnson and Miss Helen Peterson. My dad interviewed both teachers. He was a thin man with hollow cheeks, slightly resembling Abraham Lincoln. He spoke softly and was a gentle person. However, he also had a straight-faced sense of humor. I've been told that the school board decided to hire only single teachers who could afford more time to plan their lessons at night, and teachers who did not smoke. Miss Peterson told my younger brother that the interview frightened her because she could not tell when he was serious. Miss Peterson taught grades one through four, and Miss Johnson taught grades five through eight and also was the principal. These two teachers were highly motivated and they put their heart into giving the students the best

education possible. Their efforts were very successful. For most of the students, going to school was a pleasure. In fact, I recall one student who cried when we had a holiday; she hated to miss school. To this day, most of the students say that they were fortunate to have had Miss Johnson as their teacher.

Each teacher taught four grades with four to seven students in each grade. This required much work in many subjects during class time. It also required taking much work home for grading. If someone was injured at school, Miss Johnson drove them home or to a doctor. The school had no telephone. Miss Johnson drove the boys' track team to games or events at other schools in her 1929 Model "A" Ford, which some players say she nicknamed "Herby." She did this on her own time and at her own expense. She bought the basketball players letterman "F's" for their jackets. She also had a dinner for the team at her house after the tournament. These two teachers spent almost all of their daylight hours on



Photos courtesy of Belva Johnson Olson

PHOTO ON THE LEFT: *Miss Belva Johnson began as a teacher and principal at Fernhill Grade School in 1930.*

PHOTO ON THE RIGHT: *Miss Helen Peterson taught grades one through four at Fernhill Grade School.*

school activities because they were determined to make a difference in the students' lives.

MISCHIEVOUS TRICKS

Our school didn't have the problem of guns, drugs, or tobacco as some schools have today. However, we engaged in fierce wars: rubber gun wars, spear fern wars, snowball fights, etc. We drew up sides and had wars. If you here hit, you were out of the game. We cut auto inner-tubes into circular strips and stretched them on a wooden pistol with a long barrel. If you got zapped, it would sting. We cut ferns from the hill across the road and made spears that we threw at each other, We were lucky that no one was injured. When school was out, we occasionally had a fern fight on a fernhill near the Parker farm. I remember two neighbor kids who came over and teamed up against my brother, Howard, and me in fern fights. Some of the boys at school made bean shooters, using a forked limb and a strip of rubber. I made one, too, but because I didn't have any beans to shoot, I shot rocks. They really hurt, so I left it at home.

On one Halloween, some boys waxed all the school windows and tied the school bell so that it wouldn't ring. when the teacher found out who did it, she made them get up on ladders and clean the windows. The janitor had to climb up on the roof to free the bell. On



*Laser print of Lawrence Parker's
basketball school letter from 1935.*

another Halloween, Mr. Lien's utility trailer was dragged up the fifteen steps to the school porch. Next day, the boys removed the trailer from the porch and put it back.

The Lien family lived directly behind the school; their driveway was adjacent to the basketball court. In the winter, the boys built snow forts behind the school. When they got tired of throwing snowballs at each other, they would bombard the girls with them if they walked near their forts. When Viola Lien walked home for lunch, the boys peppered her with snowballs. To avoid running the gauntlet in her return to school, she would sometimes detour over the Milde property to the front of the school. Some days, she brought a lunch to school to avoid the hassle.

On rainy days, some boys restacked the wood pile in the basement and made a room (hideout) in it. When my dad found out about it, he and Miss Johnson made them tear the wood pile down before it fell on someone.

A group of boys got together and decided to have some fun with an old car tire. They tied a rope to it and wrapped it with tire wrapping so it looked new. They put it in the middle of the road. When anyone stopped, they pulled it off the road. This was considered great fun. A bus driver wasn't amused and called the sheriff who chased the kids through the woods. There were some scared kids at school the next day.

When summer vacation started and it was hot, my older brother, Howard, and I went swimming. We walked a mile to the Columbia River and swam near the railroad bridge. It was a meeting place for neighbor kids who enjoyed swimming. We would eat blackberries growing along the highway while going to and from our swimming hole. One day, two upper grade boys threw berries at passing cars, splattering their windows with red berry juice.

Finally, one car came by with the windows rolled down. The boys plastered the car with berries, hitting both the side of the car and the driver. He slammed on his brakes and we all ran. I was one of the smaller kids in the group, so I dove into the ferns and hid. He didn't catch any of us, and finally drove off. That was the last time the boys threw berries at cars.

I broke my arm at school when I was in the third grade. I tried to see how high I could swing without hanging onto the ropes. In fact, I broke my arm three times between the ages of five and sixteen. I was usually doing something that I shouldn't have been doing.

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

Fernhill Grade School had an old piano which Viola Lien played while we marched into the grade school each morning. The piano was also used in school programs and graduation ceremonies. School plays were held twice a year at Fernhill. This required setting up a sectional stage for the plays. The stage was also used for graduation ceremonies.

The annual May Day Festival was a big event for the girls at Fernhill. A May Day pole was set up with paper streamers. In later years, the festival was held in the apple orchard at the Lewis ranch. The costumes worn by the girls were made of crepe paper. Mrs. Elsa Simonsen, principal, remembers cutting out the crepe paper costumes.

SPORTS

Basketball was a favorite sport for both boys and girls. In 1927-28, the upper grades had more girls than boys. In those years the girls' basketball team was outstanding. They played other small schools in the area. In 1934-35, the upper grades had more boys than girls. The boys' basketball team won the Class B Championship in 1934.

Baseball and track were also sports

played by both boys and girls. Mrs. Simonsen said that John Grotting won the county high jump wearing a pair of felt slippers. She was not aware that he didn't have athletic shoes for the event. Mrs. Viola (Lien) Scholze remembers being on the track team and attending the event at Seaside. Milo Carpenter, a neighbor, coached the boys' and girls' track teams. One student remembers Ollie Dybvik giving a gift of baseball equipment to the school one year. Ollie was the owner-driver of the school bus which transported the children to Fernhill Grade School, and transported the high school students to Knappa-Svensen High School or Astoria High School, whichever high school they attended.

Playing marbles was a game enjoyed by both boys and girls at Fernhill; however, it was primarily a boys' game. The boys came to school with a bag of marbles. If you hit someone else's marble, you kept it. At the end of the day, you might have a fuller bag of marbles (or smaller). There was another game called, "Prisoner's Base." No one could remember how it was played, but we do remember getting torn shirts from the game.

WINNING THE TROPHY

In 1934, our school entered the grade school boys' "B" basketball league. It is still a mystery to me how we got in the league, as our school was one of the smallest schools in the county. We only had three boys in the eighth grade and five boys in the seventh grade. Our team was made up of three eighth graders, Harry Spang, Harold Christensen, and Howard Parker, and two seventh graders, Willard Hansen and Einar Lundman. We had no gymnasium; we played basketball in an outdoor court built with a 2 x 4" wooden frame covered with chicken wire. The floor was gravel and dirt. As we had no gym, no games were

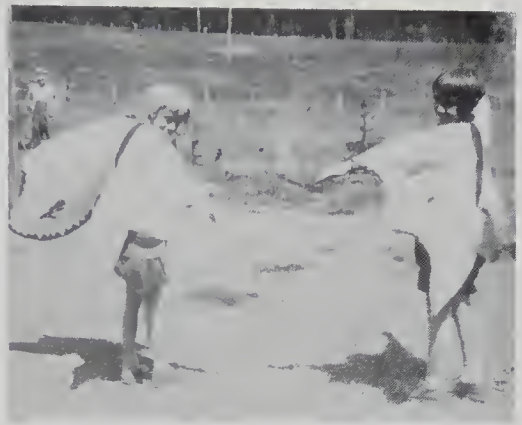


Photo courtesy of Viola Lien Scholze and Alice Lien Ranta

May Day celebration in 1928. Viola Lien is at left in both photographs. The butterfly at right is Dorothy Hathaway.

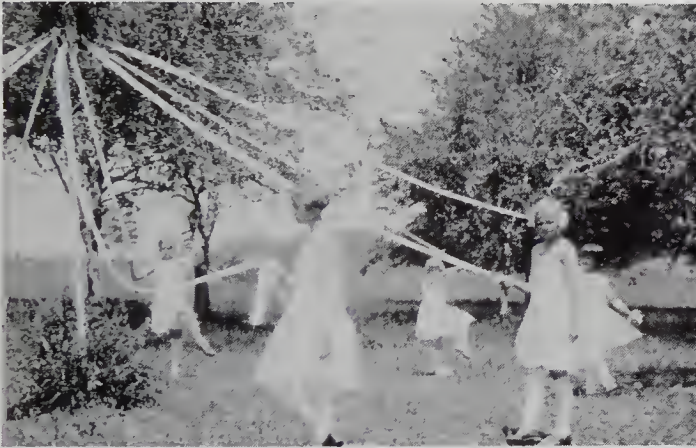


Photo courtesy of Einar Lundman and Corrine Lundman Juniper

Girls dance around the May pole at the May Day celebration in 1927 or 1928, possibly held at the Lewis ranch. Corrine Juniper noted that the girls were not allowed to roll their stockings below the knee without written permission from their parents.



Photo courtesy of Einar Lundman and Corrine Lundman Juniper

The May Day Queen is flanked by her court, May 1927 or 1928 - possibly held at the Lewis Ranch orchard.



Photo courtesy of Einar Lundman and Corrine Lundman Juniper

Fernhill Grade School 1927 girls' basketball team. Front row, left to right: Virginia Beckner, Lenore Christensen, and Eleanor Hume.

Back row: Corrine Lundman, Ellen Milde, Oda Aspen, Pearl Christensen, Alice Lien.

played at our school. Miss Johnson drove the team to all games. The team played league games with Knappa, Svensen, Lewis and Clark, and other schools, (Those of us reminiscing about the old school days were unable to agree what other schools were in the league.) All games were played in their gym or the Uppertown firehall gym. The play-off games were at Lewis and

Clark School.

In spite of all our disadvantages, our team played hard and won the 1934 "B" grade school championship and took home the trophy. With no gym, no home court advantage, no coach, and usually no substitutes, our team pulled off a miracle. Miss Johnson did not train us as a coach would, however, she inspired the players better than most coaches, and they played their very best to please her. We also had two tall players who gave us a height advantage and three smaller players who were very fast. All were good shots. Also, the ride in Miss Johnson's Model A Ford, Herby, may

have given them some enthusiasm.

In 1935, the five eighth grade boys made up the team: Willard Hansen, Einar Lundman, Donald Leslie, Erling Grimstad, and Lawrence Parker. We had a good season, but did not win the championship that year. We gave up our trophy as we couldn't keep it unless we won two years in a row. I think that Lewis and Clark may have won in 1935



Photo courtesy of Viola Lien Scholze and Alice Lien Ranta

Fernhill Grade School 1928 girls' basketball team. Left to right: Lenore Christensen, Virginia Beckner, Oda Aspen, Corrine Lundman, Alice Lien, and Eleanor Hume.

and they probably still hold this trophy.

GRADUATION IN 1935

Although I wasn't the smartest kid in my class, I found out in grade school that math was fun. This led me to a life-time career in accounting and corporation auditing. I was also musically inclined and played both a saxophone and a violin. In our graduation ceremony, I played a violin solo.

The Fernhill Grade School closed years ago. It has since been used by the volunteer fire department and the water bureau, and today it is used as a holly farm storeroom.

Mrs. Elsa Simonsen became very active in community affairs and the 4-H after leaving Fernhill Grade School. She still lives in the Fernhill area. Miss Belva Johnson left the school several years after I graduated and was married.

She and her husband ran a ranch in the Youngs Bay area for years. When she started her career as a rancher, Mrs. Belva (Johnson) Olson had an opportunity to teach at a teachers' college, but decided to continue ranching. She is a medical buff and has a library of medical books. She played in the symphony for years, and still practices her piano. She also still runs Belbuck Ranch.

If there were a teachers' hall of fame, these two teachers would deserve a place of honor. It took a dedicated person to teach in a country school like Fernhill. In fact, all of the teachers who taught there deserve some recognition. I owe a lot



Photo courtesy of the author

Photograph taken about 1935 on the back stairs of Fernhill Grade School. Standing from front to back: Donald Leslie, Edwin Parker, Lawrence Parker (author), and Willard Hansen.

FERNHILL
GRADUATION EXERCISES

Processional
Salutatory.....Viola Lien
Class History.....Donald Leslie
Violin Solo.....Lawrence Parker
Reading, "The Country School".....Einar Lundman
Piano Solo.....Viola Lien
Class Will.....Willard Hansen
Vocal Solo.....Cladya Spher
Address.....Rev. M. A. Christensen
Valedictory.....Erling Grimsted
Remarks to Class.....Superintendent Anne Lewis
Presentation of Diplomas.....A. Grimsted
Recessional

CLASS MOTTO
"He conquers who endures"

CLASS ROLL

Cladya Spher
Donald Leslie
Lawrence Parker

Erling Grimsted
Einar Lundman
Willard Hansen

SCHOOL BOARD

A. E. Grimsted.....Chairman
Peary S. Parker.....Member
Milo Carpenter.....Member
William Woleiffner.....District Clerk

Miss Belva Johnson.....Principal
Miss Helen Peterson.....Teacher

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Photo courtesy of Belva Johnson Olson

Members of the 1936 graduating class from Fernhill pose for the camera on the beach at Seaside. From left to right: Inga Carlson, Louise Parker, Edwin Parker, Howard Bilan, Melvin Iverson, Carrie Grimstad, Margaret Mannison, and Beryl Sphar.

to them. My years at Fernhill Grade School gave me direction in life and are now a pleasant memory.

Many people have helped gather information and photographs for this article. I would like to thank the following: Mrs. Viola Abrahamson, Gordon Beckner, Erling Grimstad, Willard Hansen, Melvin Iverson, Mrs. Lorna Kairola, Einar Lundman, Mrs. Belva Olson, Edwin Parker, Howard Parker, Mrs. Alice Ranta, Mrs. Viola Scholze, Mrs. Elsa Simonsen, Harry Spang, Clarence Swanson, Mrs. Laverne Wahlstrom and Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Wolfgram.

Lawrence Parker is also the author of several articles on the Parker family in the 1990 Summer, Fall, and Winter issues of Cumtux.



Photo courtesy of Belva Johnson Olson

Melvin Iverson helps hold up Carrie Grimstad, at left, and Miss Belva Johnson, principal of Fernhill Grade School, at an outing in Seaside for the 1936 graduating class.

Upper grades at Fernhill Grade School in 1931

All four photos are courtesy of Belva Johnson Olson



The Fifth Grade

(graduated in 1935)

Left to right:

Miss Belva Johnson, Principal, Louise Parker, Viola Lien, Erling Grimstad, Willard Hansen, Harvey Anderson, Lawrence Parker, Donald Leslie, Einar Lundman.



The Sixth Grade

(graduated in 1934)

The three boys on the right played on the winning basketball team in 1934.

Left to right:

Miss Belva Johnson, Clarence Swanson, who left the class that year, Harry Spang, Howard Parker, and Harold Christensen.



The Seventh Grade

(graduated in 1933)

Left to right:

Miss Belva Johnson, Clarence Lerback, Sven Osterlund, Gordon Beckner, Arne Lundman, Kenneth Leslie and Anton Gjovik.



The Eighth Grade

(graduated in 1932)

Left to right:

Elmer Lager, Dewayne Anderson, Andrew Leslie, Arthur Stromsness, Martin Osterlund, Lorna Larson, Avis Hansen, Opel Bryant, Grace Parker, Miss Belva Johnson.

1939 Classes at Fernhill Grade School



Photo courtesy of Mrs. Laverne Wahlstrom

LOWER GRADES

Front row: (Left to right) - Margy Francis, Isabel Quick, Dorothy Forseth, Audrey Basil, (?), Roberta Basil, Eloise Anderson, and Patricia Knudsen.

Back row: Alice Johnson, Lois Simonsen, (?) Carr, (?) Carr, Eddie Blount, (?) Carver, Carl Johnson, Jimmy O'Brian, and teacher, Robertha Burrell.



Photo courtesy of Mrs. Laverne Wahlstrom

UPPER GRADES

Front row: (Left to right) - (?) Coffey, June Johnson, Mary Miles, Donna Carr, Jean O'Brian, Corrine Basil, Vivian Lahti, Lennah Parker, Signi Grimstad, Noma Carpenter, Minnie Blount.

Middle row: Lewis Johnson, Delbert Sigfridson, Clarence Parker, (?) Coffey, Ray Swanson, Mervin Hansen, Lars Gjovik, Billy Hutchins, and Jimmy Aspen.

Back row: Gene Knudsen, Eleanor Iverson (teacher), (?), Elmer Forseth, Warren Parker (?), Leonard Forseth, and Hank Cole.

Clatsop's Past

SEA SCOUT PHOTOGRAPH

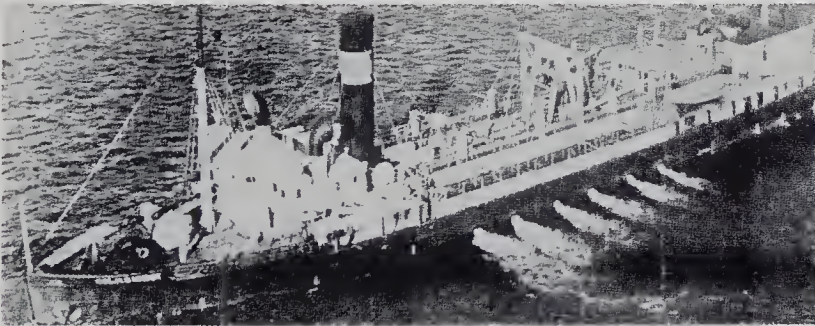
Harold Nelson and Don A. Goodall, former Sea Scouts, provided names of the two boys who were unidentified in the photograph on the inside front cover in the Summer 1993 issue of *Cumtux*. Both agreed that Adam "Chris" Frickey was third from the right in the back row. Neither was certain about the identity of the boy fifth from the right in the back row. Harold Nelson suggested that he might be Gelmer Lyster and Don Goodall thought he might be "Tweet" Horton, younger brother of Les Horton. Harold Nelson noted that Gelmer Lyster's brothers were the original owners of the Schooner Tavern on Twelfth Street in Astoria.

Every person identified in the photographs at the CCHS archives will be indexed in the card file by Bettie

McCue, volunteer worker. If you can provide information for the photographs not properly identified in this issue, drop a note to Bettie or the *Cumtux* Editor at the Heritage Center, 1618 Exchange, Astoria OR 97103.

DATES EXPLAINED

Thane W. Tiensen, sent in an explanation for the apparent discrepancy in dates of discharge in the article "Shanghaied At Astoria" by W.J.R. Osborne, pages 2 and 3 of the Summer issue. In Europe and many other parts of the world, dates are written with the day first, then month and year. Therefore, the date of Osborne's engagement of service was the 5th day of March 1903, and for his discharge, it was the 7th day of December 1903. The dates now correspond and the puzzle is solved.



MORE ON THE COL. P.S. MICHIE

Charles Haddix wrote with some additional information about the Michie. At the national convention of the American Merchant Marine Veterans held last June, he met George Appellof of Lynwood, Washington, a member of the *Michie* crew in 1948. Appellof, who now publishes the newsletter *Northwesterly* for the Puget Sound Chapter of the American Merchant Marine Veterans, provided part of the answer to what happened to the *Michie* in later years. He reported that the *Michie* was sold at auction to the Venezuelan government and renamed the *Puerto Cabello*. The dredge remained on the American Bureau of Shipping Register until the 1980's.



Photo courtesy of Lawrence Parker

Knappa-Svenson High School Band (1936)

BACK ROW (Left to Right - Standing) - Rev. Withnell (band leader from Westport), Phil Luoto, Lawrence Parker (violin), Gottfrid John Haglund, Eugene Gerttula, Jimmy Meehan, Howard Parker (trumpet), Mr. C.J. Skinner, Principal.

MIDDLE ROW (Seated) - Ed Coleman (drums), Robert Ziak (Saxophone), Karl Humberg (violin), Venita Boyd, Betty Mulkey, Martha Boentgen, Naomi Black.

FRONT ROW (Sitting on floor) - David Pfund (trumpet), Erling Grimstad (clarinet), Donald Leslie.

The small boy standing in the front center of the picture, holding a baton, was the band mascot. His was George Coleman, younger brother of Ed Coleman. His uniform was apparently a special-make as the colors of the letter and the cape are reversed.

Clatsop County Historical Society
 1618 Exchange St., Astoria, OR 97103

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